

Pesticide Safety Tips

Although pesticides can be useful, they also can be dangerous if used carelessly or not are stored properly. Here are some tips for safer pest control:

The most effective way to reduce risks posed by pesticides is to use non-chemical control methods to reduce or eliminate pest problems. Around the home, such measures include removing sources of food and water (such as leaky pipes) and destroying pest shelters and breeding sites (such as litter and plant debris).

If you decide you must use pesticides, always read the label first and follow the directions to the letter, including all precautions and restrictions.

- Don't use products for pests that are not indicated on the label and don't use more pesticide than directed by the label. Don't think that twice the amount will do twice the job.
- Use protective measures when handling pesticides as directed by the label, such as wearing impermeable gloves, long pants, and long-sleeve shirts.
- Change clothes and wash your hands immediately after applying pesticides.
- Before applying a pesticide (indoors or outdoors), remove children, their toys, and pets from the area and keep them away until the pesticide has dried or as recommended by the label.
- Don't spray outdoors on windy or rainy days. Take precautions to keep the pesticide from drifting or running off into the vegetable garden, pool, or neighbor's yard.
- Remove or cover food during indoor applications.
- If using a commercial applicator or lawn care service, ask for information about potential risks and safety precautions to take.
- Don't buy more pesticides than you will need. If you have leftover pesticides, check with your local government to determine whether your community has a household hazardous waste collection program or other program for disposing of pesticides.
- You may also call 1-800-CLEANUP, a private, national hotline, for information about recycling and waste disposal in your area.
- Keep the telephone number of your area Poison Control Center near your telephone.

Here are some tips to follow if you have children living in your home or if children visit your house or yard:

- Always store pesticides away from children's reach, in a locked cabinet or garden shed. Child-proof safety latches also may be installed on cabinets and can be purchased at local hardware stores and other retail outlets.
- Never transfer pesticides to other containers that children may associate with food or drink.
- Never place rodent or insect baits where small children can get to them.
- Teach children that "pesticides are poisons" - something they should not touch.
- Alert others to the potential hazard of pesticides, especially care givers and grandparents.

In case of an emergency, try to determine what the person was exposed to and what part of the body was affected before you take action, since taking the right action is as important as taking immediate action. If the person is unconscious, having trouble breathing, or having convulsions, give needed first aid immediately. Call 911 or your local emergency service. If the person does not have these symptoms, call the Nation-wide Poison control Center at 800-222-1222 or your physician. Have the product container with you when you call for assistance - remember to act fast!